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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007

#### In Today's Papers

Ambassador Wilson in Eskisehir  
Cumhuriyet, Sabah, Zaman, Aksam and others report that US Ambassador Ross Wilson visited Eskisehir yesterday. He visited Eskisehir Governor Kadir Calisici, aviation industry facilities, and Anadolu University. When responding to press at the Governor's office, the Ambassador said that "the US is aware of the difficulties and hardships caused by PKK terrorism. We are working together with Turkey against terrorism. Useful information has been given to Turkey for protection of its people. The PKK has understood for the first time that they are not welcome either in northern Iraq or in Turkey. They have enemies in the US, Europe and here." Ambassador Wilson added that he "came to Eskisehir to further improve relations between Turkish and US universities and with business circles."

Turkish Business Circles Determined to Continue EU Reforms  
Milliyet, Sabah, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Radikal and others: Mainstream Milliyet gave front-page coverage to criticism of the EU by Turkish business circles. The President of the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD), Arzuhan Dogan Yalcindag, criticized France's harsh stance against Turkey. She said "the goal of EU politicians is to infuriate Turkey and make Turkey give up its efforts to join the EU. We will be angry, but we will not give up on our path." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet says Turkey is preparing its response to the declaration to be released by EU leaders today in Brussels. Before the approval of the declaration, Turkey plans to summon the Ambassadors of EU countries, including France, to the Foreign Ministry. Cumhuriyet noted that if EU leaders approve the document in its current form, Turkish FM Babacan may boycott the EU's inter-governmental conference on December 18. This conference will open two new chapters in Turkey's EU accession process.

#### EU-Turkish Relations

Commenting on EU-Turkey relations, Sami Kohen wrote in mainstream daily Milliyet: "As we approach the end of 2007, Turkey is entering

a new period in its relations with the EU. This period is marked by growing disappointment as negotiations continue with hardly any sign of improvement in 2008. Given the fact that France will assume the presidency in the second half of 2008, we shouldn't expect any positive change in Turkey's application for membership to the EU during that time. While it is true that the attitudes of France and some others are the main reason for Turkey's disappointment in the EU process, we should also acknowledge that Turkey has made mistakes. During 2007, both Turkey's public and government officials have lost their EU aspirations. Regardless of the motives or reasons, Turkey has distanced itself from the EU. In turn, Turkey has shown a weak attitude when it comes to political reforms.

Both the government and the parliament started behaving in ways that reflect rising nationalist and religious movements throughout the country. If we really want to get back on track, we should focus on new strategies. The first step should be to appoint a ministerial post that is solely in charge of EU related issues. Second, Turkey should continue with its reform process in order to demonstrate a vigorous reform process. We keep hearing from Turkish officials that reforms are for the benefit of the Turkish people and not solely because of the EU process. This is a good time to act with this spirit."

Okay Gonensin commented in mainstream daily Vatan: "Whether politicians or businesspeople, we have expressed our outrage at France's indignant attitude toward Turkey's EU accession process. Interestingly enough, we tend to believe that everything hinges on Sarkozy and his attitude. Did we forget about the French Foreign Minister Kouchner, whom we like to call a friend of Turkey? We are ignoring the fact that the EU mentions Turkey's 'limited progress' while it praises Croatia for its significant success. Turkey has done nothing significant in the last two years to bring itself up to EU standards. The ruling AKP government should think about

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reforming article 301 before getting mad at France. The AKP has failed to fulfill its commitments and has demonstrated a significant lack of political will to continue the EU process. Neither EU countries nor the Turkish public will take the European Union process seriously without the government's will to continue reforms."

MHP Leader Devlet Bahceli's Remarks concerning DTP  
Milliyet, Sabah, Zaman, Hurriyet and others: At a breakfast meeting with journalists, Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahceli said that PM Erdogan and TGS Chief General Buyukanit should make a joint statement on terrorism for the people to understand where the government and the military agree and disagree on the issue." Mainstream Sabah reports that Bahceli responded to AKP Vice Chairman Dengir Mir Firat's remarks that 'he had not seen the PKK in the parliament as the TGS chief implied,' by saying "We can see the ones who had relations with the PKK in the past and who have continuing court cases on the issue, in the parliament. They are sitting on our left." Bahceli added that woman wearing the turban should be free to enter the universities and added some parties are using this issue as a 'political vitamin.'

UN Seeks Information on Malatya Murder Case  
Milliyet reports that the UN Commission for 'religious tolerance' asked the Turkish Foreign Ministry to submit information and documents about last April's brutal murders of three Bible publishers in the southeastern city of Malatya. The Dutch Protestant Church and Geneva Union of World Churches filed a complaint to the UN Commission on International Religious Freedom. The complaint alleges there is no religious freedom in Turkey.

Armenian Journalist's Remarks on the Genocide Issue  
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah and others: Armenian-American journalist Harut Sasunyan said that the main goal of Armenians seeking recognition of their genocide claims is to obtain compensation and land from Turkey. He urged Armenians to pursue legal actions in line with this goal.

TV Highlights

NTV, 7.00 A.M.

#### Domestic News

- The new President of YOK will meet the board of university rectors today.
- Deputy Prime Minister Nazim Ekren urges businessmen to launch new initiatives in support of the nation's economic growth rate.
- 25 illegal Pakistani migrants were arrested in Edirne and 26 illegal migrants from Mauritania were arrested in Bursa.

#### International News

- President Gul signed an agreement with Kazakh President Nazarbayev for long-term economic cooperation.
- US State Department Counter-terrorism Coordinator Dell Daily told the Washington Institute "we are in favor of a political, not a military, solution for the PKK in both Turkey and northern Iraq."

WILSON